

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2157

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USIAC

E.O. 11652: N/

SUBJECT: PRESS ACCUSATION OF AMERICAN/ISRAELI PLOT AGAINST
ETHIOPIA

SUMMARY - USIS AND PEACE CORPS ETHIOPIA PERSONNEL ARE
ACCUSED BY NAME IN JULY 23 "AFRIQUEASIE" ARTICLE OF ACTIVE
ROLE IN JOINT AMERICAN/ISRAELI ATTEMPT CONVINCE ALL FALASHA
JEWS TO MOVE TO ISRAEL. ARTICLE STATES PRESSURE USED TO OVER-
COME FALASHA OBJECTIONS AND EMPEROR'S RESISTANCE TO MOVE.
CONCLUSION ARTICLE IMPLIES THIS ISRAELI PLOT TO LAY HISTOR-
ICAL BASIS FOR CLAIMING ETHIOPIA AS PART OF JEWISH HOMELAND.

1. ARTICLE HEADLINED "ISRAEL REDISCOVERS A 'LOST TRIBE,'"
SUBHEAD "WHAT CAN THIS SUDDEN INTEREST IN POOR FALASHAS
MEAN?" BY PIETRO PETRUCCI. "AFRIQUE ASIE" IS PARIS-BASED
RADICAL MAGAZINE HEADED BY SIMON MALLEY. IT IS SOLD WIDELY
IN AFRICA AND HAS REPLACED "JEUNE AFRIQUE" IN SOME FRANCOPHONE
COUNTRIES AS THE CREDIBLE MAGAZINE AMONG INTELLECTUALS.

2. ARTICLE GIVES BACKGROUND PAST ISRAELI AND AMERICAN
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INTEREST IN FALASHAS, THEN STATES: "TEL AVIV AND WASHINGTON

ARE PUTTING FINISHING TOUCHES ON FINAL ACT OF 'DRAMA OF FALASHAS,' WHILE SEEKING TO KEEP (THEIR GOVERNMENTS' IMPLICATION TO MINIMUM. THIS IS THE MECHANISM. CREATION OF NETWORK OF AGENTS, WHO ARE, LET IT BE NOTED, ALL AMERICANS, AND AMONG WHOM MOST IMPORTANT ARE..."

3. AMERICANS NAMED AS ACTIVE ARE: MR. AND MRS. GERSON, NEW YORK, "WHO GIVE FINANCIAL AID TO FALASHAS WHO ARE LEAVING"; MR. AND MRS. BILL MATEER, PEACE CORPS, GONDAR, "RESPONSIBLE FOR 'IDEOLOGICAL' MOTIVATION OF FALASHAS'"; MR. AND MRS. ARTHUR AND BARBARA BERGER, "OFFICIALLY FUNCTIONARIES OF AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER (USIS), RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTACTS BETWEEN FALASHAS AND ISRAELI EMBASSY." LATER IN ARTICLE, RONALD SKLAR, 'DEAN OF HSIU LAW FACULTY' IS ALSO NAMED.

4. ARTICLE STATES ETHIOPIAN GROUP ALSO CREATED. IT MENTIONS "STUDENT GETAHUN MAMO -- TO WHOM ARE ADDRESSED THE 'CHECKS' OF GERSON COUPLE AND TO WHOM USIS IS ABOUT TO AWARD A 'STUDY SCHOLARSHIP' SO HE CAN FREE HIMSELF OF ANY DEPENDENCE ON ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT AND DEVOTE HIMSELF ENTIRELY TO PREPARATION OF EXODUS." STUDENT AND "RABBI OF GONDAR ABEKE BEKHAN" CALLED PART OF "NEW GROUP OF FALASHA LEADERS OPPOSED TO 'INTERGRATIONIST' YONA GOGALE." ALSO CITED IN GROUP WHO "SHUTTLE BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN GONDAR AND ADDIS ABABA: ATO BEKHAN BARUCH, AKLILU YADESSE AND RONALD SKLAR."

5. ARTICLE STATES RECENT ARTICLE IN "JEWISH CHRONICLE" ON FALASHAS "AFFIRMS ETHIOPIAN JEWS ARE PART OF 'LEGENDARY TEN LOST TRIBES' (WHICH AFFIRMATION IS ?) IN PART BASED ON EXISTENCE OF JEWISH KINGDOM IN ETHIOPIA WHICH KEPT ITS INDEPENDENCE UNTIL BEGINNING OF 17TH CENTURY."

6 ARTICLE CONCLUDES, "EMPEROR AND HIS COURTIERES SHOULD PERHAPS REMIND THEMSELVES THAT TO TAKE POSSESSION OF PALESTINE AND LAY CLAIM TO 'GREATER ISRAEL' FROM NILE TO EUPHRATES, ALL ZIONISTS NEEDED AS 'LEGAL SOURCE' WAS A SITUATION WHICH EXISTED MORE THAN 2000 YEARS AGO. IN PRESENT CASE, THE REFERENCE IS MUCH CLOSER..." (ARTICLE ENDS WITH THREE DOTS.)

7. COMMENT: DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW REMOVING FALASHAS FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ETHIOPIA WOULD LAY BASIS FOR TERRITORIAL CLAIM, BUT SOME PEOPLE WILL BELIEVE ANYTHING. THOSE OPINION-MAKERS WHO OFTEN BELIEVE "AFRIQUEASIE" ARE NOT, HOWEVER, LIKELY TO SWALLOW THIS. INTENT ARTICLE PROBABLY TO EMBARRASS AMERICANS AND ISRAELIS, AND UNDERCUT THEIR STATUS IN ETHIOPIA, RATHER THAN PRESENT BELIEVABLE 'PLOT SCENARIO.'

8. ARTICLE BEING POUCHED TO ADDRESSEES.

HARRIS

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